

*Carabus morbillosus* F., the accomplished predator *Staphylinus olens* Müll. and the robust scarab *Pentodon algirinum* Hbst. Anyone encountering this spider should give it a wide berth.

Water boatmen are recognised as efficient predators in Britain. On 8.ix.1990 in our ponds at Little Comberton, I noticed a water boatman (*Notonecta glauca* L.) take a worker wasp (*Vespa vulgaris* L.) from the surface. The wasp was held across the body of the bug, obviating its inclination to sting. Although the wasp was eventually killed (by piercing the membranes behind the head) death was not a rapid process.

In contrast a frog 21mm long that was caught by a mature *N. glauca* on the same day succumbed almost at once and was carried down over two feet by the bug, a demonstration of their considerable power. On the following day as a third significant observation, a larvae, normally noxious, of a Large White (*Pieris brassicae* L.) fell into the pond and was rapidly despatched by an adult *N. glauca*. Most of it was eventually consumed by a large dystiscid *Acilius sulcatus* (L.) with evident alacrity.— P.F. WHITEHEAD, Moor Leys, Little Comberton, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 13EP.

#### **Unusual wing-drying posture in *Orthosia* species (Lep.: Noctuidae).**

In spring 1990 I had many pupae of three *Orthosia* sp. collected from the foot of trees near Banff, Grampian Region, and was able to observe the behaviour of the emerging moths. Although the breeding cage was furnished with twigs and had roughened sides to facilitate climbing, a minority of the *O. incerta* Hufn. and *O. gothica* L. successfully inflated and dried their wings whilst resting on the floor of the cage. For *O. stabilis* D.& S. this seemed almost the preferred method, and many crawled but a centimetre or two from the empty pupal case before doing so. All other Lepidoptera I have bred seem to need a vertical or even overhanging surface from which to cling when inflating and drying their wings, otherwise these are deformed or bent. Perhaps the ability to use a horizontal surface is an adaptation to enable these newly-emerged *Orthosia* species to remain hidden if necessary in the ground litter at a season when there is little vegetation to conceal them if they climbed.— ROY LEVERTON, Whitewells, Ordiquhill, Cornhill, Banffshire AB45 2HS.

#### **The larval diet of *Dryops ernesti* des Gozis (Col.: Dryopidae).**

On 20th March 1990 I observed a few larvae of this species in shallow pools at Saintbury, Gloucestershire. They were actively consuming super-saturated wood tissue of elm (*Ulmus procera* Salsb.) logs submerged in the pools, amongst adults of the same species.—P.F. WHITEHEAD, Moor Leys, Little Comberton, Pershore, Worcs WR10 3EP.

#### ***Epiphyas postvittana* Walk. (Lep.: Tortricidae) and *Anomoia purmunda* (Harris) (Dipt. Tephritidae) in Bristol.**

My colleague Andy Pym purchased a Heath-style light trap earlier this year and after its first operation in his garden in Filton, Bristol (ST 60799), on

23rd April 1990, brought me a micro-moth which he did not recognise. This was a male *E. postvittana*. This record adds another vice-county (34, West Gloucestershire) to those from which this moth has been taken and reinforces the impression given by recent reports (*Ent. Rec.* **101**: 277 and **102**: 73) that it is currently expanding its range northwards. I have since observed other specimens in my own Bristol garden (ST 5875), within the same vice-county, and it would appear to be well established here.

I was also interested to find in my garden on 30th August 1990 a tephritid fly, *A. purmunda*. White, in his RES Handbook Vol. 10, pt. 5(a), (1988) gives no Gloucestershire or Somerset records and reports no recent records from the west of England. Audcent (*Proc. Bristol Naturalists' Soc.*) **28** (1950) pt. 1: 65) lists his own captures for Somerset at Clevedon as 5.8.40 and 26.8.44. He also gives Gloucestershire records from Bainbridge Fletcher at Rodborough 2.6.36 and from d'Assis-Fonseca at Durdham Down, Bristol 4.9.47.

The Audcent collection, now housed in the City Museum & Arts Gallery, Bristol (Ac. No. 3/1983), has further specimens taken at light in Clevedon by H. Bird on 17.7.50 and 22.7.50. My own capture and these others are of interest as White's information suggests the adult is only usually seen from April to June.— R.J. BARNETT, City Museum & Art Gallery, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1RL.

### *Schrankia taenialis* Hbn. (Lep.: Noctuidae) in N.W. Kent.

After reporting the arrival of a specimen of this moth at my garden m.v. light on 13th July, 1987 (*Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* **99**: 239) I suggested that *taenialis* might still be a resident of this area despite the previous sighting being as long ago as 1984, for Bexley Park Woods. Further evidence for this suggestion was the arrival of another specimen on 10th August, 1990 at the same light.— B.K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Dartford, Kent DA5 2HN.

### Observations on the genus *Sepedophilus* (Col.: Staphylinidae) in Worcestershire.

The following notes provide many new records for Worcestershire and the West Midland region. In some cases the ecology of the species is difficult to quantify. At some sites elsewhere in England, *Sepedophilus littoreus* occupies exclusively\* the more usual niche of *Sepedophilus bipunctatus* (dead, soft, often water-saturated heartwood); the association with ants is presumed to be facultative.

*Sepedophilus bipunctatus* (Gravenhorst). Decayed willow (*Salix fragilis* L.) Evesham (SP04) 30.ix.1988 with *S. testaceus* (F.), new to vice-county. In felled ash on Bredon Hill (SO94) quiescent with ants *Leptothorax acervorum* (F.) 19.ii.1989. Almost certainly northernmost British records. *S. testaceus* (Fabricius). Recorded in January, February, March, June,